

Connections

Teaching, Learning, and Research

November 20, 2006

From Our Trainers

The faculty training program at Western Carolina University has undergone some re-tooling over the past year, and we are excited to tell you about the changes. We are able to offer workshops on new products and services as well as for our existing software. After listening to our clients, we are offering some shorter "How To" sessions to cover the most frequently asked questions and are continuing to explore more user friendly training options.

We understand the need to offer workshops on the software that we use every day, such as Outlook, Word and Excel. These workshops are offered on a very regular basis, and can be used to gather baseline skills or Power Users Mastery. There is also a growing need to offer workshops on newer, more specific software and tools for faculty, staff and/or students. In order to meet these needs, we are offering workshops on Adobe Acrobat Professional, WebCat, Fireworks and Dreamweaver, to name a few (check out our listing on the web). We also offer topic-specific workshops for departments or targeted groups.

In order to assist the faculty, staff and students with task-oriented problems, we are now offering some one hour "How To" sessions. These sessions include How to Deal with Junk E-Mail, How to Archive Your E-mail, and How to Perform a Mail Merge in Microsoft Word as well as an introduction to Podcasting, Turnitin, Camtasia, Garage Band and other new

services and software packages.

We are working toward creating self-paced online training modules for those who are unable to attend the workshops due to location or timing constraints. These workshops will start with our "How To" sessions and grow into our other offerings such as Introduction to Microsoft Excel. Our main goal is to offer workshops that are needed by the faculty, staff and



SUE GRIDER



CHRIS SNYDER

students in a fashion that as many people can participate as possible and we are making changes each semester to reach this goal.

FACULTY CENTER
CONTACT INFORMATION
EXT: 7196
[HTTP://FACCTR.WCU.EDU](http://FACCTR.WCU.EDU)

From the Director's Desk

The Coulter Faculty Center newsletter has a new name and a new look. *Connections* reflects our theme "Creating Connections Faculty to Students, Faculty to Colleagues, Students to Meaning, Faculty and Students to the Community."

It also reflects our expanded focus of connecting teaching, learning and research into a service delivery system that links faculty resources under one umbrella, all within the framework of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. This reorganization began with the January 1, 2006, merger of part of Educational Technologies with the Center. In addition, we have expanded resources for research such as assistance with research design, Fulbright application assistance, SPSS, SAS, and the soon to-be-added Qualitative package, Atlas TI. We have also added a Digital Media lecturer to respond to the high demand from faculty for digital media services. To assist faculty with teaching and learning, we have added two instructional developers.

To celebrate our expansion and redesign, we cordially invite faculty to an Open House on December 5 from 3:00 to 5:00 in the center. We will honor Dr. Myron Coulter, our Chancellor Emeritus, and his wife Barbara and their recent gift to benefit the Scholarship of Teaching and learning at WCU. Come by for good food, a chance to say hello and thank you to Dr. Coulter, and a chance to tour the Center. We have done some rearranging and made a small attempt at decorating. We hope that if you have not already done so, you will begin to discover the Coulter Faculty Center as an "oasis of support." We are here to serve you and welcome your questions and suggestions at any time.



ANNA T. MCFADDEN
DIRECTOR

TO R.S.V.P. FOR
THE OPEN HOUSE, CALL
JANE KNELLER AT EXT 7196.

The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning at WCU



JOHN HABEL
Senior Fellow for
SoTL



LAURA CRUZ
SoTL Faculty
Fellow

“We must,” wrote Earnest Boyer (1990a) in *Scholarship Reconsidered*, “move beyond the tired old ‘teaching versus research’ debate and give the familiar and honorable term ‘scholarship’ a broader, more capacious meaning.” Boyer argued there are multiple forms of scholarship that include but are not limited to the form that produces new knowledge. Scholarship, contended Boyer, also includes the way scholars teach and the application of knowledge.

By first suggesting there are multiple forms of scholarship and then proposing a framework for applying the tools traditionally used to assess scholarship, such as peer review, to these forms of scholarship, Boyer created the foundation for scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). His purpose was to encourage and reward serious intellectual work on teaching and learning within and across the entire range of disciplines in higher education.



SOTL AT WCU

The banyan tree in the illustration above, with its ever-spreading canopy and its ever-expanding system of aerial roots, is the symbol of SoTL at WCU. SoTL is that canopy and from it grow the roots of active inquiry about teaching and students’ learning, innovation, collaboration and dissemination. At WCU we conceive of SoTL both broadly and more narrowly and formally. Broadly conceived, the SoTL canopy at WCU covers the entire range of faculty development programs that

comprise a “teaching commons,” to use Huber and Hutchings’ (2005) term. At WCU, these programs include our faculty learning communities (FLCs—this semester we have 13 FLCs with over 100 members), our annual Summer Institute on Teaching and Learning, our SoTL Faire, and many other programs sponsored by the Coulter Faculty Center and by other offices on campus. More formally conceived, SoTL at WCU is one of Boyer’s multiple forms of scholarship. It is an evidence-based approach to establishing and sustaining focus upon continuous improvement of teaching and learning and assessment of that learning. SoTL has come to be recognized nationally and internationally as a legitimate form of scholarship that uses the same methodologies and maintains the same rigor as traditional disciplinary research.

In addition SoTL has come to be formally acknowledged as a form of scholarship in section 4.04, “WCU Collegial Review,” in the proposed revisions to WCU’s Faculty Handbook that are to be reviewed by WCU’s Faculty Senate later this semester. While these local, national and international developments do much to confirm SoTL as one of multiple forms of scholarship (drawing on the Boyer model), it is important to continue to create more and better occasions to talk about and collect evidence about our students’ learning and ways improve it. This means building and maintaining the infrastructure that brings people together for sustained, substantive and constructive discussion. This also means creating conditions in which communities of educators can come together to share and create powerful, locally understood knowledge about teaching and learning and to develop and refine methods of inquiry about teaching and learning.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

During the last two decades, the concept of community building in institutions of higher education has been the topic of much discussion. An ERIC search for the years 1994 to 2005 retrieved 189 articles on “campus community” and an additional 358 on “building community.” It goes without saying that talking about community is far easier than constructing real communities of learning and scholarship on college and university campuses.

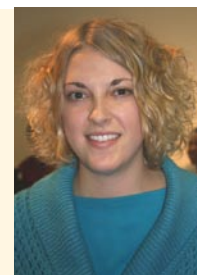
In *Campus Life: In Search of Community*, Boyer (1990b) presented principles that “define with some precision the enduring values that undergird a community of learning.” Taken as a group, Boyer believed these principles “define the kind of community every college and university should strive to be.” According to Boyer, a university is an “educationally purposeful community” insofar as members of the faculty and students collaborate to strengthen teaching and learning on campus. For Boyer, a genuine university community also is a “celebrative community” in which rituals affirming the mission of the institution are widely shared.

The SoTL canopy at WCU provides a variety of mechanisms for building real community. As our University grows and becomes more diverse, connections that faculty develop with each other by “going public” with their efforts to strengthen their teaching and their students’ learning perform an important function in building community. When we—students, staff and faculty—take seriously the elusive goal of building community, we acknowledge that we are engaged in a common intellectual quest, uniting the entire campus around teaching and learning—what Boyer called the “foundational principle” of campus life.

REFERENCES

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- Boyer, E. (1990b). *Scholarship reconsidered*. Princeton, NJ: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.
- Huber, M. T., & Hutchings, P. (2005). *The advancement of teaching: Building the teaching commons*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

“No one ever asks us what we think”: The Benefits of Small Group Analysis



STEPH
CERASO,
VISITING
INSTRUCTOR,
DEPARTMENT OF
ENGLISH

I enter my classroom and scope out the scene. It is 7:57 a.m. A few students are staring vacantly as they gnaw on their fried breakfasts from Chic-Fil-a. Some stumble in behind me, iPods thumping full blast. The entire back row appears to have entered a catatonic state. They are so still. I wonder if they are even breathing. I wonder about a lot of things. I know these are smart kids. Tired, but smart. But what do they really think about this class? Are they learning? Am I getting through to them? I really don't know. What aren't they telling me? How can I break the silence? These questions keep me up at night. Well, they used to...

If you also find yourself losing sleep over silence, don't fret. Help is available. As faculty members at WCU, we have access to a rare and invaluable service. Upon request, Dr. Anna McFadden, Dr. Amy Martin, and Dr. Robert Crow will come to your classroom, free of charge, and conduct a Small Group Analysis (SGA). Speaking from personal

experience, the SGA provided me with the most helpful and productive feedback I have ever received from my normally closed-mouthed students. Like an academic team of Ghostbusters, this group of professionals cleared my classroom of all of its creepy unspoken anxieties and concerns.

From a teacher's perspective, the SGA is informative and stress free. It's not very often that someone from outside of your department volunteers to give you feedback on your teaching. The SGA team gathers detailed, focused feedback from your students while you are not in the classroom. They are not there to criticize or evaluate you. They are simply collecting information. In addition, the fact that these people are "strangers" to your classroom helps the students feel more at ease. As Omar Thomas, a student in my Composition 101 course, stated, "Dr. McFadden made me feel comfortable about expressing my thoughts on the class. It was easier for me to talk to a stranger than directly to you. Strangers don't give us grades." Because of the SGA team's outsider status, my students weren't afraid to give honest feedback.

The most surprising aspect of the SGA was my students' reaction to it. When we discussed whether or not they thought the SGA was worthwhile, they responded with an enthusiastic "YES." One of my students exclaimed, "It was great. No one ever asks us what we think. It was really cool to have someone listen to our opinions on the class." Students were thrilled that they were asked for their opinions. Some said it made them feel more involved in their

education. While I think the SGA was a wonderful experience for this reason, I found my students' reaction rather disturbing. They seemed almost shocked about "being allowed" (their words) to have a say in how the class was being run. We may believe that our students should play a more active role in their learning, but my students' reaction demonstrates that we haven't made that clear to them. This is something that deserves much attention and discussion, and sharing the results of more SGAs could help fuel the conversation.

The SGA gave me the opportunity to address and clarify the concerns my students brought up, and it was also quite useful to them. They claimed that the questions they were asked made them think about what they have learned so far, how they have learned it, and what kind of activities have facilitated their learning. In other words, the SGA turned out to be a very effective metacognitive activity for my students. Most importantly, it led to a class discussion about what was working in the class and what was not. Getting this feedback now, as opposed to receiving it from the dreaded "end of semester evaluation," allows us to make adjustments that will improve the quality of our class before it's too late. I highly recommend the SGA and so do my students. As one young woman put it, "I wish all of my professors would do this. They would if they cared."



Initiatives in eLearning



DR. JOHN
LEBARON,

JAY M. ROBINSON
DISTINGUISHED
PROFESSOR FOR
EDUCATIONAL
TECHNOLOGIES

The eLearning faculty fellows, Claire DeCristofaro, John LeBaron, Dixie McGinty and Mary Teslow, have launched their fall activity with a focus on the Online Course Assessment Tool (OCAT), developed and field tested in draft form last spring and summer. For the current academic year, all four fellows will serve as initial lead trainees for the use of this tool, and roll it out on a pilot basis to start late in the fall or early spring. For inter-rater reliability, all four eLearning fellows will assess the same online courses.

Under the joint auspices of the CFC, the Division of Educational Outreach and the Jay M. Robinson Educational Technology Fund, the second Passages faculty development retreat for eLearning was held November 3 and 4 at the High Hampton Inn in Cashiers. Keynoter/resource person Dr. Steven Tello of the University of Massachusetts launched the event with a presentation entitled "Supporting Faculty and Students Through eLearning Transitions." The Retreat included a panel of online students discussing issues from their perspective and breakout sessions featuring lead eLearning faculty. All four eLearning faculty fellows led a breakout session.

The faculty fellows are considering strategies for initiating a Web-based mentoring service designed to link client WCU faculty eLearning leaders so that consultations may be initiated as needed from client faculty members themselves. The Web site

would contain biographical information for the online mentors along with conditions of availability and examples of innovative practice and expertise.

The eLearning Faculty Learning Community has been launched. Following the practice launched in 2005-2006, eLearning FLC members have been strongly encouraged to document their innovative online practices, possibly with a SoTL scholarship focus, to regional and national conferences. The idea is for the more senior, tenured FLC members to cooperate actively with their untenured peers to develop papers for peer-reviewed events. The upcoming SoTL Faire and the UNC Teaching and Learning with Technology events have been particularly promoted for this purpose.

This year will see the first annual university-wide Jay M. Robinson teaching award in eLearning. The award will begin in the 2006-2007 academic year, and will be supported annually for five academic years at a level of \$1,000 from the Jay M. Robinson (JMR) endowment. Procedures for launching this competition will begin in the fall semester.

A RESOURCE FOR FULBRIGHT APPLICANTS

At the request of Provost Carter, a working group of WCU faculty members have begun efforts to create a consolidated base of information and assistance for faculty members contemplating international opportunities for development under the various Fulbright programs. This working group began meeting in October

with a view to launching a set of consultative faculty resources throughout the academic year. Although this initiative remains in a planning phase, the following activities have been discussed:

- A university-wide panel event for potential Fulbrighters, featuring a representative(s) of CIES in Washington, with Fulbrighters telling their stories and small-group breakouts to discuss in greater depth experiences, opportunities and requirements

- A Web site featuring individual WCU Fulbright experience, illustrated with such information as video, PowerPoints, and narrative stories

- An electronic database of links, tips, and pointers for potential Fulbright applicants.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT JOHN LEBARON.

FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITY OF DISTINGUISHED PROFESSORS

Emerging from the planning for the September 18 Philanthropy and the Professoriate symposium on distinguished professors, a faculty learning community of distinguished professors is currently under development. Scheduled to meet for the first time in mid-October, this group will set an agenda for collective effort to include, among other things:

- Strategies for advancing the visibility of distinguished professors on campus

- Collaboration among the incumbents supported by program endowments

- Discussion of common concerns and methods to communicate them as a group.

DR. JOHN LEBARON
COORDINATES THIS GROUP.



The Sandbox Experience



LAURA
CHAPMAN,
FACULTY
TRAINING
SPECIALIST

Wrap your mind around the sound of faculty talking, laughing, clicking and creating, and you have a small picture of what the Sandbox is like. The primary mission of the Sandbox is to support all faculty members who wish to incorporate instructional technology into their classrooms. The Sandbox is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.—5p.m.

Laura Chapman (chapmanL@email.wcu.edu/3023) and Matthew Hundley (mhundley@email.wcu.edu/3419) staff the area and are available for faculty to schedule specific times for individual consultations.

Many faculty visit the Sandbox to take advantage of the resources. Ron Michaelis, visiting assistant professor in the Biology department, has been a Sandbox dweller for the past three years. Ron comes in to scan materials and text so that his students can retrieve them from his website (<http://paws.wcu.edu/michaelis>).

He comes into the Sandbox at least twice a week to ensure that his students have the course notes they need to help them be successful in their course.

Pamela Buskey, adjunct instructor



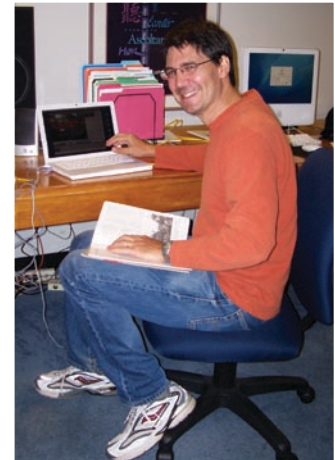
in the Educational Leadership and Foundations department, has been capturing short video clips to stream to her students. She worked with Matthew to learn how to do this through a program called Real Producer. Pam is now self-sufficient with this process. She is a wonderful example of the success of our “teaching you how to fish” philosophy. Here is a quote that expresses how Pam feels about her digital video learning material:

“Through the use of the digitized videos, I am able to give to my online students some of the same media material I use for my face-to-face classes. Much of the media that I use is footage of actual public school classrooms. Being able to stream these videos has added a new dimension to my online course that would otherwise not be possible.”

George Mechling, professor in the Management department, has dedicated many hours to designing and refining his instructional website. On his website George has two links that reveal other facets of his personality. One link leads you to his Wall of Heroes (<http://paws.wcu.edu/gmechling/heroeswalltext.htm>). This page shows an image of George’s office wall, which has pictures of his “personal heroes.” The other link of interest shows images of ESCOs plaster statues (<http://paws.wcu.edu/gmechling/StatuaryWorldText.htm>).

Hartwell Francis, Cherokee language program director from Western’s Cherokee Studies department, and Enrique Delattibodier, multimedia assistant and Macromedia Flash expert,

are working together to create instructional learning objects to



be used in the Cherokee Studies curriculum.

Hartwell hopes to train students to create both low-tech and hi-tech learning objects. Hartwell feels that technology is an untapped tool for preserving and maintaining the endangered language of the Cherokee.

The learning objects that Hartwell and Enrique have created can be viewed at:
<http://ustream.wcu.edu>.

In the Coulter Faculty Center Sandbox, it is not the computers that make this a fun place to work; rather, it is the people that come in to play. The Sandbox is a community in and of itself. If nothing else, we try our best to keep the candy dish full. Please accept this as an invitation if you have yet to experience the Sandbox.



WebCT/ WebCAT News

From the WebCAT Team



KEVIN SISSON
WebCAT Team Leader



JOHN ASHCRAFT
WebCAT Team



JEFF KISKA
WebCAT Team

As most of you are aware, WebCT/WebCAT training and support have now moved to the Coulter Faculty Center. Our challenge this year is providing support for both WebCT Edition and WebCAT (the name our students gave to the upgraded version known as Vista). Because Blackboard is phasing out support for Campus Edition and has replaced it with their Vista upgrade, we must make this switch and have everyone on WebCAT by spring 2008.

Since spring 2004 the number of WebCT courses has increased 254%, and the number of students in WebCT/WebCAT courses has increased 694%! In order to better serve all users in a timely manner, we are instituting a new support route for faculty. We are asking that you call 7487 (the Help Desk) and ask to be directed to WebCT/WebCAT support. The Help Desk will transfer you to a number for which we are purchasing rollover lines. This means that if John Ashcraft is on the phone, Kevin Sisson or Jeff Kiska can take your call. Currently, contacting members of our team directly or by email is resulting in backlogs and we want to be able to serve faculty in a timelier manner by distributing the work evenly among our team members.

Students will simply call the Help Desk at 7487 and identify their problem. We are finding that many students have simply not configured their browsers correctly and staff at the help desk can handle that problem. If the problem is beyond configuration, the student will be

forwarded to the WebCAT Team. The number for weekend support for everyone is still 227-2930.

We currently have 60 faculty who are piloting WebCAT with about 150 courses. We have just surveyed that group and held two user group meetings. This feedback will serve us well as we refine our support and training. In addition to group training and one-on-one support, we are now creating online training and will be running some open labs with staff

available to answer questions. We are now working on classes for spring 2007.

FOR INFORMATION, GO TO

<https://online2.wcu.edu/>

*Please let us know if you should
have questions.*

WebCT at Western Carolina University

<https://online2.wcu.edu/>

Picasa Web ... - NCMattJ | liquidlibrary | HPC Printing | Mayang's Fre...ure Library | Rhapsody - ...ore - FREE | WebCT | MyCat

WEBCT@WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

WebCT Frontpage | Coulter Faculty Center | IT Division | Western Home

Login

Be sure to check your browser if you have not already.

Common Problems

Having trouble with WebCT or WebCat? Check here first!

You may also check the list of known issues concerning WebCT and WebCat to determine if there is a workaround to your problem.

Student Support

Frequently Asked Questions
WebCT Tutorials
Downloads (IT Website)

Instructor Support

Frequently Asked Questions
Training and Workshops
How-to Guides
About Responsus
Online Forms

Other Software

Centra
Responsus
Turnitin

Latest News

New easier way to find WebCT and WebCat

Fri October 27, 2006

Due to the fact that <https://online2.wcu.edu/> can be a somewhat difficult URL to remember, we have created two aliases to this address that are hopefully much more intuitive and easy for you to remember. You can now get to the WebCT/WebCat homepage using the address www.wcu.edu/webct or www.wcu.edu/webcat!

Spring 2007 courses ready for development!

Wed October 18, 2006

Important information for all instructors

The WebCT and WebCat servers are ready for our faculty to start their development work. Every course listed in the Banner student information system now has a WebCT course shell ready to develop on the WebCat or WebCT sever. (Courses have been created in WebCT by default, if you would like your course in WebCat please complete [this form](#) for each course).

Copy a previous course in to your spring 2007 course

All courses start with a blank template (WebCT) or a tool allowing you to transfer a previously taught course (WebCat.)

- * How to copy previous course content into your new course.
- * Request assistance with WebCT course copy

Crosslist (combine) multiple spring 2007 courses.

Crosslisting is a feature that allows you to treat a number of WebCT or WebCat courses as if they were one. If you would like to crosslist a number of WebCT or WebCat courses so that they function as a single course, please fill out the form.

Teach in WebCat

We are entering Phase III of our WebCat migration project. During this phase we make WebCat available to an increasing number of faculty and courses. If you would like to teach your spring 2007 course in WebCat please fill out our WebCat Course Request form.

- * Request a WebCat course
- * WebCat workshops (face-2-face and online workshops)
- * Request a one-to-one WebCat consultation
- * Learn more about WebCat

Important Information About Internet Explorer 7

Tues October 10, 2006

(Updated: Friday October 27, 2006)

At this time, the Microsoft Internet Explorer 7 web browser is not yet officially supported for use with WebCT (WebCT Campus Edition 4.1) or WebCat (WebCT Vista 4.0). What this means is that the browser check wizard that determines whether your system is

Digital Media Services



NEIL TORDA

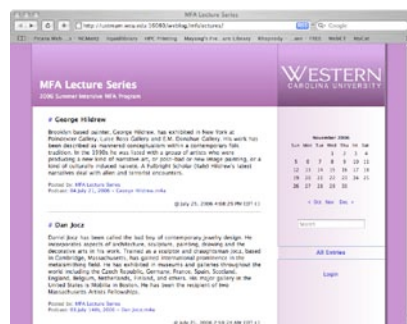
The Coulter Faculty Center can assist faculty and graduate teaching assistants with all types of digital media services, including Wikis, Blogs, Podcasts and Digital Video projects.

WIKIS are websites based on a collaborative content management system. Wikis allow any member to

A BLOG or weblog is an online journal with commenting features. Blogs are very popular today and are an effective way for students to share their ideas and comment on each other's work. Classes such as art in new media are using them to foster dialogue between students on many different topics. The blog server can also be used to host Podcasts, such as the Cherokee and Japanese language podcasts as well as the Summer MFA Lecture Series.

PODCASTS are digital media files that can be audio or video in format. They can be played on computers or digital media players like Apple's iPod mp3 player. Enhanced podcasts can combine still images, web links, and chapter markers with audio to make a useful tool for

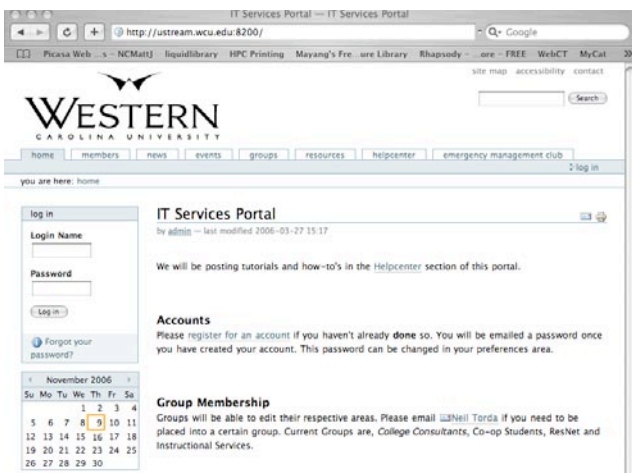
your classes. The Cherokee and Japanese language podcasts use this technology so that students can see a visual representation of the items being discussed in the audio.



DIGITAL VIDEO
Whether you want to videotape a class lecture so students can watch it later or you want to make a tutorial or documentary film, give us a call and we can help you get started using digital video for all your needs.

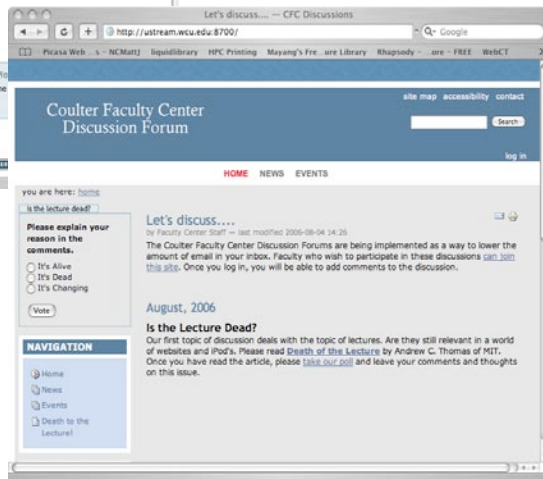
IF YOU WOULD LIKE
MORE INFORMATION ABOUT
DIGITAL MEDIA AND WAYS YOU
CAN INCORPORATE IT INTO
YOUR CLASSES, PLEASE CONTACT

NEIL TORDA AT
227-2667
OR
VIA EMAIL AT
TORDA@WCU.EDU.



add, edit and publish content on the website with no specialized software. An easy-to-use user interface for managing content and member privileges makes wiki a great tool for project management and group projects.

Examples of some of our wikis can be found by going to <http://facctr.wcu.edu/InstructionalTechnology/DigitalMedia/wikisblog.html>.



Teaching Tip: *Think-Pair-Share*



ROBERT CROW AND AMY MARTIN
Instructional Developers

At mid-semester, student attention spans start to disappear, and you may find that productive class discussions disappear as well. To breathe some life into student discussions, try the Think-Pair-Share technique, a method that requires students to work individually first, then in groups or pairs, and finally together as an entire class for productive discussion.

First, have students think and write down ideas individually. For example, in a biology class, have students write about anything they found interesting and/or confusing concerning their reading assignment on cell mitosis (Bonus: If you warn students beforehand that they will have to do a short in-class writing on their reading assignment, they might actually read it!).

Next, depending upon the size of the class, have students pair up or form small groups. Each pair/group should choose a recorder, who will be responsible for summarizing in writing the group's/pair's discussion of what each member

found interesting/confusing about the reading.

Finally, each group/pair should share the results of their discussions with the entire class, designating one or two members of each group to be the group's "spokespeople." Encourage the groups/pairs not to repeat what other groups have already said. Your role as the instructor is to record the group's/pair's contributions on the board, pushing students to be more specific (i.e., Student: "That paragraph on page 28 was confusing." Instructor: "Well, what specifically about that information did you find confusing? The entire paragraph or only certain ideas?").

Ultimately, the Think-Pair-Share allows each student to contribute to the class in some substantive way (by contributing to the small group/pair discussion and, therefore, contributing that information to the entire class), and you as an instructor will have a list of topics on the board that could be a starting place for further discussion during the same class period or a later one.